



Symbiosis[©]

The newsletter of the Prairie States Mushroom Club

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<http://www.iowamushroom.org>

Looking Forward

by President Glen Schwartz

The 2012 mushroom season is about to begin, and everyone I talk to is excited. The extra early spring has people eager to get out and look for morels. Mike reports that they are beginning to pop up in Southeastern Iowa already. While we haven't had the same record warmth, if the weather holds and we get some rain, we might find them in mid-April. We have decided to wait to schedule morel-hunting forays until we know when and where they are popping up. This means that all but one morel foray will be short-notice. You can help set the schedule by informing us of when you first find morels in your area. Roger Heidt is serving as our foray chair, so give him a call at 319-573-4795.

Speaking of forays, we have already scheduled our annual fall foray and meeting. We wanted to continue the trend set last year when we had the meeting at the Wickiup Learning Center. Holding it at a facility like that allowed us to have power for potluck food, a warm indoor location for a program, our meeting, and indoor plumbing. Most county nature centers have all of these desired features. Johnson County's Kent Park Conservation Education Center near Oxford, Iowa is our choice for this year's gathering. Please reserve a spot on your calendar. It will be on Saturday, October 6th. The Center will be open at 9:30. At 10:00 a.m. we'll orient the public and then disperse to one or more foray locations in the park. We'll plan on cooking up the best of our finds to add to a 12:30 potluck lunch. Around 1:15, Nicole Cook, a new member from Des Moines, will present a program on the mushrooms of Bolivia that she helped find and identify. The public is welcome to either leave afterwards or stay for our business meeting. We should be cleaned up and ready to head home by 3:30 p.m.

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A New Record, Rosanne's Reply

by Mike Krebill

I sent the following email to many of our members:

On Tue, Mar 20, 2012 at 6:52 PM, Mike Krebill

<mikekrebill@aol.com> wrote:

Greetings!

Today, I talked to six Keokuk high school biology classes about spring mushrooms. Two boys came up to me afterwards and said that they had already found morels in the Keokuk area. Caleb Hayden went hunting with his uncle 3/18/12. He found 10; his uncle 20. Cody Bartles found four while hunting on his own. Temperature has been in the 80s for the last four days, and we've had a little overnight rain, but could use more. A neighbor up the street from me took the soil temperature to determine whether he could seed grass yet, and found it 50 degrees. (That is certainly in the realm of possibility for morel emergence, as soil temperatures fluctuate by up to seven degrees or more in a day.) I have a friend who planned to hunt morels today and left a message for him to call me back.

Rosanne wrote back, but didn't do a "reply all." Thought you might enjoy reading it:

Oh Fun!

Well, this seems pretty early, even for Southern Iowa! The Herbarium database records show that there was a collection on March 2nd in Ames, IA in 2002, identified by Lois Tiffany as *Morchella esculenta*. There is also a very odd earliest record at Fort Madison on Jan. 17, 2001. There was a picture by a reporter to verify it. Dr. T.

(cont. on pg. 3)

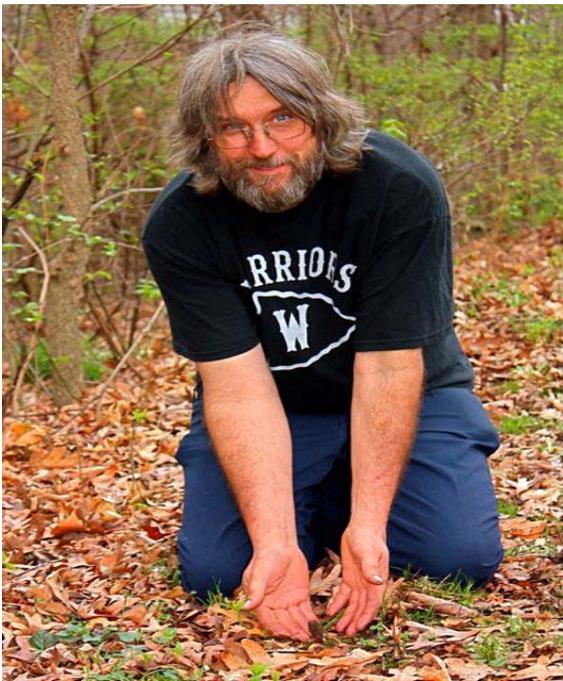
Morel Reports

by Mike Krebill

A mild winter and a string of 80-degree days in mid March have triggered the start of the morel season in Iowa unusually early. Thirty-four morels were found in the Keokuk area March 18th.

Brent Hoffman of Sioux City, IA started an Iowa Mushroom Club page on Facebook, and wrote that some folks in Ponca, NE reported finding morels the week of March 18th. He noted that it was “at least three weeks earlier than we’ve had before.” In another post, he said that a few small grays and blacks were reported from NW Iowa on March 20th and 21st. “We don’t recall ever finding morels in March before. If the warm temperatures hold and we get some rain, it could be record-breaking year.”

On March 22nd, our Weed ‘Em and Reap wild edibles club took a hike in a Hamilton, Illinois park, and James Noble – one of our members – spotted a tiny, well-hidden morel.



Photos by Mike Krebill

Encouraged, a friend and I walked 40-acres of his woods that have been productive in the past. Mayapples were emerging; spring beauties and Dutchman’s breeches, violets, redbuds, and dandelions were flowering; Missouri gooseberry was one of the understory shrubs in leaf – all prime time indicators that morel season was starting. Much of the oak-hickory woods was dry and in need of rain, unfortunately. After a very wet spring in 2011, Southern Iowa experienced a summer and fall drought, with very little snowfall over winter. Until the rain comes, we may have to restrict our hunting to the base of slopes where ground water seeps out. We saw no morels, but enjoyed a pleasant walk in the woods.

Black morels were found in Monroe, IA on March 22nd. To the best of my knowledge, that’s a new location for them in Iowa. Herbarium collections have come from Jackson, Linn and Louisa counties.

Jess Lancil, naturalist for Madison County Parks, wrote me that she found her first little gray in Madison County March 23rd. She was concerned that rising ground temperatures might result in a very short mushrooming window.

(cont. on pg. 3)

Morel Reports

(cont. from pg. 2) **Looking...**

(cont. from cover)

Dave Layton reported finding three tiny morels in the Clinton area March 24th.

Toby Knapp of Jones County, IA, found three very small grays on a south-facing hillside on March 24th.

My friend invited me to be part of a family foray Sunday morning, March 25th. I had to decline as I serve as a member of the choir in my church. He later told me that the four of them hunted from 7 to 10 a.m., but found nothing. His daughter has a friend who told her that morels were being sold in Kahoka, Missouri. Kahoka is about 20 miles west of us, but may have had more rain, and might not have the clay we have here.

On March 26th, Sherri Selin reported finding some small morels south of Des Moines.

On March 26th, I headed to a Scout meeting early; as I had promised that the older Scouts could make dandelion donuts for the rest of the Troop. A mother and two of our younger boys had also arrived early, but they were in an adjacent woods and called me over to see the six gray morels they had found but not picked. They were dinky, all less than an inch tall, but appeared to be fully emerged. The clay soil was dry, hard, and cracked. We decided to leave them there until the following Monday, hoping that we might get some rain during the week that would help them grow. On Tuesday, I went over to pick and photograph the biggest one, which had been knocked over, to show you its relative size.



I thought about dragging a hose over to the corner of the woods where they were, and hooking up a sprinkler. My concern, while it might work, is that it would also advertise their presence.

Who else but a desperate morel hunter would do something like that? 😊



We are looking forward to an exciting year hunting mushrooms. It will *have* to be better than the disaster of last year. I am anxious to see how many mushrooms we can contribute to the Herbarium at Iowa State. This issue of our newsletter provides details on how to collect and submit voucher specimens to the University. Remember, if you find an unusual mushroom, you can collect a voucher specimen on your own. This activity is not limited to club forays. If you collect and send in a voucher specimen, let us know about it so we can help you celebrate your contribution to science (and maybe we can talk you into writing an article for *Symbiosis!*)



A New...

(cont. from cover)

identified it as *M. esculenta* also. Her notes say “probably dehydrated and frozen left over from previous fall, near Mississippi River”.

Looks like the season may be upon us?

Thanks Mike!
Rosanne



Forays Until the Next Newsletter

by Roger Heidt

The two-to-three week earlier spring this year may cause us to adjust our plans, and hold forays that are not listed below. In the past, we have had some short notice unscheduled forays with a notice sent out by e-mail. The majority of our members have e-mail but there are a few that do not. For those that don't do e-mail, yet would like to be informed of any unscheduled forays not listed below, please contact me at 319-573-4795. I'll put you on my "Please call" list and will try to leave a phone message for you if you don't answer.

Saturday, April 28th, 10:00 a.m.,
Erem's Farm, in Cedar County, north of West Branch and near the Cedar River.

Directions: The address is 1398 Franklin Ave., West Branch, IA. From I-80, take the West Liberty exit, go 5 miles north to the T, hang a left, go one mile, hang a right, go one mile and you're there. Our thanks to Suzan Erem – whom we met at Prairie Preview March 8th – for this invitation to hunt mushrooms on her 72 acres.

Thursday, May 3rd, 6:00 p.m.,
Wickiup Learning Center, in Linn Co. near Cedar Rapids.

Directions: From I-380 in Cedar Rapids, exit at Blairs Ferry Rd. Go 4.9 miles west on Blairs Ferry. Turn right onto Horseshoe Lake Rd. and go north 1 mile to Feather Ridge Rd. Turn left and go west 1.1 miles to the Learning Center.

Marty Augustine of the Prairie State Mushroom Club will lead participants

on a search for fungus at Wickiup Hill on this evening. Meet at the Wickiup Hill Learning Center parking area, and be ready to car pool to the back prairie as a starting point. Of course, at this time of year, most folk's thoughts will be on the tasty morel mushrooms. We will learn a bit more about local mushrooms – who knows, maybe someone will even share their favorite spots. Bring a container to collect mushrooms and dress for conditions that may include ticks, mosquitoes or poison ivy. Cost: \$2.50 for adult, \$1.00 for children 16 and under, or \$5.00 per family. No charge for Mushroom club members.

Saturday, June 16th, 10:00 a.m.,
Brushy Creek State Recreation Area in Webster Co. near Ft. Dodge Iowa, South Equine Day Use Area.

Directions: From Ft. Dodge, go 9 miles east on Hwy 20 to Union Ave. Go 5.5 miles south on Union to 290th St. Turn left and go east 1 mile to Vasse Ave./Wickwire Rd. Go south 0.5 miles on Vasse Ave to the South Equine Day Use Area parking lot.

We will meet at the South Equine Day Use Area, but might change location based on weather. The rare Ivory Candle was found in this area a few years ago.

Saturday, July 21st, 9:30 a.m.,
Wapsipinicon State Park, in Jones County near Anamosa Iowa.

Directions: Wapsipinicon State Park is just across the river from the city of Anamosa. From downtown Anamosa, go south on S. Elm St., AKA Co. Rd. E34, cross the Wapsipinicon River

and take the first left. Follow the Upper Park Road to the Dutch Creek shelter on the left.

Roger and Glen scoped out this park last November. It's got everything we need for a great foray, as long as the weather cooperates. There are bluffs, mature woods, and a pine plantation loaded with mossy logs. 

Caution on Eating Morels

by Mike Krebill

In 2011, a number of people learned the hard way that morels must be thoroughly cooked. Raw or insufficiently cooked morels can bring on most unpleasant vomiting and diarrhea.

A person's body can rebel if a person eats too many morels in a week's time, and this can lead to sensitization and sickness from eating any more. A woman who had eaten morels for years experienced that last year. She got mildly sick after the first meal. When she consumed them one more time, she had violent gastrointestinal distress. (Imagine, if you will, explosive diarrhea, as your body tries to rid itself of the "poison.")

Reference: the "Summary of the 2011 NAMA Toxicology Committee Report, North American Mushroom Poisonings," by Dr. Michael Beug, Chair, in *The Mycophile*, v52n2, March-April 2012. 

FUNgi FOTOgraphy: Photography Tips

The Goldilocks Principle

by Linda Scarth

Processing digital photographs is often governed by the Goldilocks principle. It is possible to apply too much or too little of an adjustment or correction to the original file from the camera. The aim is to be “just right” whether it is adjusting the exposure, color temperature or any of the possible ways to prepare the image to the photographer’s preferences.

One of the important and necessary adjustments is to apply the sharpening filter to the image whether the output is for the web or a fine print. Even the sharpest digital images are a little soft when they are recorded on a camera sensor and viewed on a computer monitor. Camera technology is not yet able to make images as sharp as can the human eye. There are several types of sharpening filters in the various image preparation software packages from Picasa to Photoshop. We use Photoshop CS5 and like the Smart Sharpening filter for most output sharpening.

Output choice governs the amount and degree of sharpening. For the small jpg file to be viewed on the www or projected in a presentation, only a small amount should be applied. More sharpening is in order when the output is a larger file to be printed at specific dimensions because ink spreads a tiny amount and can make the print less sharp.



Too Little (No) Sharpening

Too Much Sharpening

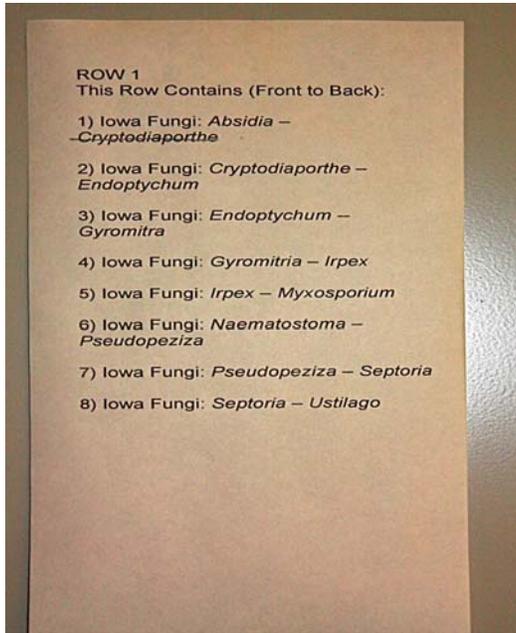
Proper Sharpening

The morel in this panel is three copies of the same file. The first was not sharpened and is slightly soft, especially around the pits and edges of the cap. The middle image was excessively sharpened so that halos are seen separating light and dark areas. There are little white lines along edges giving a crunchy appearance. The third image has just a moderate amount of sharpening that separates the intricate patterns of cap and pine needles. It is “just right”. The differences will probably be more apparent on your computer monitor than on a printout of the newsletter pdf. 

A Visit to the Ada Hayden Herbarium

by Mike Krebill

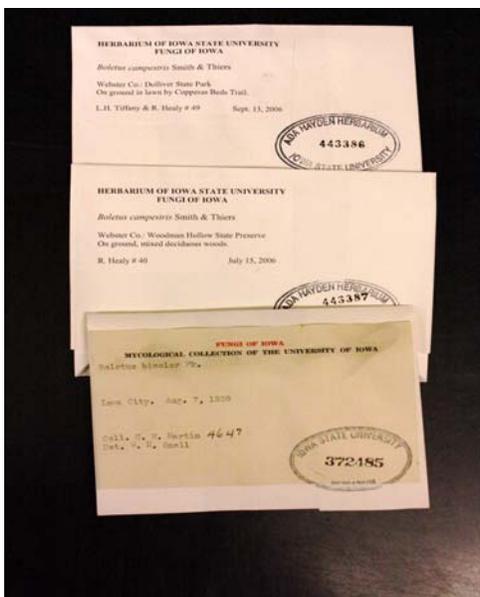
The Fungi of Iowa collection is housed in the Ada Hayden Herbarium, located in room 340 of Bessey Hall at Iowa State University in Ames. I exchanged several emails with Herbarium Curator Deborah Lewis, and arranged for a visit.



Specimens are kept in huge metal cabinets on a sliding track. The sign at the end of each cabinet row shows the organization by genera. This row houses most of Iowa's fungi, as you might guess from the alphabetized system.

Curator Lewis pulls out a filing box containing specimens that have been collected in the State. Within each genus, species are kept in alphabetical order. It is a simple and convenient arrangement. It is where voucher specimens that we submit will be stored, if they fit in a packet.

The Herbarium also contains specimens of fungi from around the world. The total holding is about 30,000 specimens. Approximately 1/10 is from Iowa.



A filing box contains about 36 of these 4-inch high by 5 1/2 inch wide packets. Each packet holds a dried specimen. The packet is cleverly constructed from a single sheet of acid-free, 100% cotton paper of the standard 8 1/2 x 11 inch size. The paper could be rolled into a type-writer years ago, or fed into a printer now. (Or a label could be printed up and attached.) After an accession number is stamped on it, with a little Origami skill the paper can be folded to create a packet into which the dried fungi and collection information may be placed. It is easy to unfold without damaging the specimen, yet contains the spores and protects the mushroom when it is filed away.

The University of Iowa transferred its mycological collection to I.S.U. in case you are wondering about the bottom packet.

(cont. on pg. 7)

A Visit to the Ada Hayden Herbarium

(cont. from pg. 6)

Shiitake Alert

by Mike Krebill



Here's one packet opened up to show its content.



Since mushrooms are largely water, dried specimens shrink way down, making it possible to fit several specimens in a small packet.

Some people are allergic to Shiitake Mushrooms (*Lentinula edodes*) when they are consumed raw or undercooked. A rash appears two days after consumption. The rash consists of dark red to purple welts all over the body. The person appears to have had a nasty case of poison ivy or poison oak that he has been scratching. For those of you with Internet access who want to know more about it, here's a link to Michael Beug's pdf that you may print out and share with friends: http://www.namyco.org/images/publications/McIlvainea_2012/Shiitake_Dermatitis_Alert.pdf



Tiny or fragile mushrooms may be boxed to provide more protection, although boxes take up more room and are more expensive than packets.

Deb showed me how to do the Origami folding of packets, and I took photos of the procedure and brought back examples so that I might teach the technique to others. 

Editor's note: Deborah Lewis (Curator of the Ada Hayden Herbarium at Iowa State), Rosanne Healy, and I have been working on this two-page form. If you have suggestions to improve it, let me know. (The fill-in space on this form has been reduced to fit this newsletter.)

Fungi of Iowa

Voucher Specimen Collection Form

Scientific name (genus, species, and variety if appropriate):

Identified/confirmed by (if different from collector):

Date of ID:

Identification reference used (if needed):

County:

Locality (The name of the property, such as Ledges State Park, followed by a more precise location point such as latitude/longitude or UTM coordinates from GPS):

Habitat (including habitat type, sun/shade, moisture conditions):

Substrate (on soil, dead wood, wood of living tree, insect, another fungus, dung, whether burned recently, etc.):

Notes & other features (colors of cap, stalk, & pore bearing surface; height; size, shape & margin of cap; attachment of gills; length & diameter of stalk; whether stalk is solid or hollow; color of spores from spore print; presence & shape of annulus & volva; smell; taste; tissue color change in response to bruising & tests with chemical indicators; any latex when cut; spore size, shape, & surface features)

Collected by:

Collection number: _____ (Use your initials followed by a number that corresponds to the specimen number in your field notes. As an example, if you are Rosanne Healy, and *Boletus campestris* is the specimen you are sending in and it is the 40th entry in your field notebook, your collection number would be RH40.)

Date of collection:

Digital photos should be saved for emailing as medium resolution files, so that the file size is reduced to between 150 and 300 KB. Kindly rename each file as follows: Genus.species.# where # is replaced by your collection number. An example of this might be *Grifola.frondosa*.RH80 for a Hen-of-the-Woods mushroom photographed by Rosanne Healy. If Rosanne took two photos, a way of designating them could be *Grifola.frondosa*1.RH80 and *Grifola.frondosa*2.RH80. If your photos are exceptionally good, they might be used on the Fungi of Iowa pages of the herbarium website. If that happens, you will be credited as the photographer.

Preparing a voucher specimen: It helps to have a mature specimen and a young one, too. Get a spore print, and then dry the mushroom thoroughly to prevent rotting. If it is small, dry it whole for two days in front of a fan on top of a newspaper, turning it occasionally. If it is large, like a bolete, cut through it to get a representative portion of the cap and stalk and dry it. A food dehydrator can be set on the lowest heat possible, and the mushroom should be dried overnight in the dehydrator. Freeze the mushroom for five days after it is completely dry to destroy any insect eggs or larvae that survived the drying.

(cont. on pg. 9)

Mailing a voucher specimen:

1. Wrap the thoroughly dried specimen and spore print in a piece of 8 1/2" x 11" paper or paper toweling, or place it in a small paper bag or a plastic Ziploc® bag.
2. Pack delicate and fragile dried specimens with this form in an appropriate-sized, durable cardboard box, cushioning it with packing peanuts or other filler. Mark the box as fragile before mailing it. If the specimen is not fragile, a bubble envelope works well and is cheaper.
3. Seal and address the box or envelope. Please include your return address.
4. Mail to the address below, and then email digital photos with a note to let me know a package is on its way.

Deborah Q. Lewis, Curator (515) 294-9499
Ada Hayden Herbarium FAX: (515) 294-1337
Iowa State University Email: dlewis@iastate.edu
340 Bessey Hall
Ames, IA 50011-1020

Thanks for your help in adding to our knowledge of Iowa's species!



Good Enough for Company?

A Study of the Edibility of *Polyporus squamosus*

by Dave Layton

*Picture yourself in a damp mill watching the huge stone wheel crush piles of grain..... Now take a big whiff. Regardless of what the odor smells like to you, however, *Polyporus squamosus* always has it.*

– Michael Kuo from *100 Edible Mushrooms*



Photo sent in an email from David Spahr

Everyone who hunts morels around here has seen the ubiquitous *Polyporus squamosus* (dryad's saddle or pheasant's back.) Some folks even eat it. I've eaten it too, but I've never cared for the flavor too much and always wondered how I could make it tender enough to eat comfortably. So I generally passed it over, knowing any trees it grows on were probably too dead to have a morel patch around. However, a recent article in the *DeWitt Observer* was about a speaker on edible mushrooms whose talk focuses on seven good edible species, pheasant-back being one of them. This got me wondering if I missed something. These mushrooms were nowhere near number 7 on my list, but I've recently been amazed at what the right recipe could do for other mushrooms that I'd underrated. Could I find such a recipe for these?

Indeed other mushroom club members have talked about enjoying its flavor. Club member Dave McDowell said the flavor reminds him a little of watermelon. Damian Pieper wrote a wonderful article "How To Boil An Old Shoe" in *Symbiosis* the summer of 2003 where he includes a recipe for soup that uses younger slices and a stock made from boiling older specimens. I first met him around that time on my first foray with PSMC and remember with delight our conversation about their edibility. I asked him "The soup still tastes like *squamosus* though doesn't it?" He agreed that one must like its peculiar flavor, which he does. I remembered my much earlier attempts at eating them, back when I

(cont. on pg. 10)

Good Enough for Company?

(cont. from pg. 9)

was eating all kinds of strange and abundant stuff like *C. quadrifidus*, *P. velutina*, and *P. cervinus*. My taste buds rated *squamosus* right down there with those sorts of edibles. I do have to admit that during some particularly lean younger years I thought all of those mushrooms were just fine on an otherwise empty plate.

More recently I found some really young *squamosus* that I had to try. I sliced them thin and sautéed them in butter and olive oil till they were brown and crispy. This made them okay, but I still wasn't sold on their flavor. Nevertheless, the *DeWitt Observer* article intrigued me so I proposed this topic to PSMC editor, Mike Krebill. Mike not only okayed the idea, he provided me with a plethora of articles, opinions (many contradictory), recipes and even warnings for my research! He got all of the information by posing the following question to NAMA members across the nation. "Can *Polyporus squamosus* be made tasty enough for company?" Here are some of the most interesting responses as well as opinions of a couple noted authors from my bookshelf.

The most striking early response to Mike's question was the warning "NO DON'T DO IT," not a good omen for my quest. Another answered, "A fairly hopeless task. Why even bother?" But soon other opinions countered those warnings. I decided I better see what the *Captain* [*Editor's note: author refers to Charles McIlvaine, pioneer American mycologist who published a richly-illustrated 700-page tome in 1900: **One Thousand American Fungi***] had to say about it. If he didn't like it, it had to be just horrible, "It is undoubtedly tough but chopped fine and stewed slowly for half an hour it is quite as tender as the muscle of an oyster and has a pleasant flavor" – McIlvaine. Okay I guess that was a good enough opinion to continue my quest. Next I checked with the famous mushroom guru from California, David Arora. If he says it's any good at all then it must be pretty good in some recipes. "...cooked thoroughly it is still thoroughly mediocre," he penned. That was hardly an endorsement. Michael Kuo (quoted below this article's title) just used a discussion of this mushroom's edibility to expand upon the definition of "farinaceous" - not very promising. But soon Mike Krebill forwarded some much more promising information!

It seems there are folks who really do know how to cook *squamosus* in recipes and they indeed share these with company! To begin with these folks all call the mushroom "dryad" so from here on I'll do the same. [*Editor's note: "dryad" is short for "dryad's saddle," an alternate common name. A dryad was a woodland spirit in Greek mythology. The mushroom is shaped like a saddle.*] The most promising opinion comes from Joe Brandt. In his article *Saddle Up* in *Mushroom: The Journal of Wild Mushrooming* from Spring - Summer 2010, Joe states, "...when very young specimens are properly prepared, they can be wonderful (and unique) culinary delights, and terrific additions to any number of dishes." He goes on to give thorough advice on preparation and cooking. Here are some key pieces of advice from Joe's article.

1. With the exception of the youngest and smallest of Dryads, we have found that the retention of the pores will add nothing to the flavor when cooked, and will only serve to absorb cooking oil in great quantity.
2. Always slice this mushroom thin; thick pieces will frequently cook unevenly, and (as a general rule) the thicker, the "chewier" it will be, which would not be a desirable characteristic. (For beef jerky it would be one thing, but a dish containing wild mushrooms is another matter entirely.)
3. For general applications, we have found that (after cleaning and slicing) a short (10-15 minute) soak in a little soy sauce mixed with some fresh lemon juice will enhance the flavor. Other types of marinades – including those with garlic – may be used if desired.

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Aha! Marinade! What a perfect way to turn farinaceous into tangy! Joe goes on to say how dryad can add a “rich earthy flavor” to tomato sauce. I can see that possibility, especially with a little pickle, celery, Worcestershire sauce, Tabasco, and vodka. Joe’s entire article is definitely worth reading. It can be found by subscribing to Mushroom the Journal on the web at <http://www.mushroomthejournal.com/index.html>. This publication is a valuable resource for all mushroomers.



Polyporus squamosus, AKA “Pheasant Back” and “Dryad’s Saddle”
Photo by David McDowell

This mushroom grows singly or in overlapping clusters on living or dead hardwoods, especially elm. Very young specimens, like the one to the left, are preferred, although the margins of larger ones – if tender enough to be easily cut with a knife – may be collected.

Other mushroomers provide some good advice on hunting and eating dryad too. This message by David Spahr had concurrence from others, “Most importantly the knife must pass through the fruit body very easily. Almost like butter. If the knife gives resistance you got there too late and should get it earlier next year.” Here’s agreement on thin slicing, “Thinly slice them and sauté them in butter to crispy pieces like bacon” – Dorothy Smullen.

This is all very promising indeed! I better conclude my secondary research and go out to do some primary research. It’s a Saturday morning in late March after an extraordinary warm spell. I know the morels are out so I’ll quit writing and start hunting. But, today if all I find is *squamosus*—er, I mean dryad, I won’t consider that I’ve been skunked! Following are several recipes for dryad. I hope to try some soon and maybe even share one with company.

First from Joe and Kathy Brandt’s forthcoming wild foods cookbook *Joe & Kathy Go Wild*.

Spring Triad with Dryads*

(cont. from pg. 11)

This recipe features an unusual combination of three mushrooms, thus the name “Triad”.
(We used artichoke tortellini for the pasta, which worked particularly well.) - Joe

1/3 cup thin sliced ramp bulbs (or shallots)	2 Tbsp. plus 1 Tbsp. vegetable broth
1 clove garlic, minced	(Keep a little more in reserve)
2 Tbsp. olive oil	4 large fresh morels, (6-8 small) halved and sliced lengthwise (quartered if small)
4-5 shiitakes, thin sliced	2/3 cup thin sliced ramp greens or green onions
3/4 cup young dryads, pores removed, thin sliced	(green parts only)
2 Tbsp. tamari/soy sauce (preferably low sodium)	Salt & fresh ground pepper
1/3 cup sliced roasted red peppers	Large pot of water
1/2 tsp. ground cumin	12 oz. artichoke (or other) tortellini
1/2 tsp. ground turmeric	Grated parmesan cheese (optional)

1. Put the water up to boil. Mix the sliced dryads with the tamari.
2. In a large frying pan, heat the oil, medium heat. Add garlic and ramp bulbs, cook 2 minutes. Add shiitakes and dryads/tamari; cook 6 minutes, stirring often. Add the morels, cumin, turmeric and 2 Tbsp. vegetable broth, cook 5 minutes, give it a stir every minute or so. Add peppers, ramp greens (or green onions) and 1 Tbsp. vegetable broth, cook 3 minutes more, keep stirred. Add salt and pepper to taste, remove from heat. (*Note: If this gets too dry at any point, add a *little* more vegetable broth.)
3. Cook pasta according to package directions. (Do not overcook!) Drain. Transfer to suitable serving bowl. Add the mushroom/ramp/pepper mixture to the pasta and mix thoroughly. Serve immediately. Top each serving with a little grated cheese, if using. Serves 2 as a main course. A fresh salad goes nicely with this dish.

Dryad and Ramp Spring Stew

1 lb. fingerling potatoes, steamed	1 Tbsp. peanut oil
1 handful ramps (or 3 leeks)	1 Tbsp. olive oil
1/2 - 1 cup sliced young dryads	1/2 cup milk
10 ounces crimini mushrooms, sliced	1 heaping Tbsp. flour
1 14-oz. package extra firm tofu	salt/pepper
(or pre-cooked, cubed chicken)	2 Tbsp. butter (or butter substitute)
Soy sauce (preferably low-sodium)	

1. Slice ramps (or leeks) fine, keeping bulbs and lower “stems” separate from leaves. (If using leeks, use white parts only.)
2. Soak dryads in tamari for 5 minutes, then drain.
3. Sauté dryads in olive oil with lower parts of ramps (or leeks) until browned. Remove from pan and reserve.
4. Cut tofu into 3/4-inch cubes. Soak in soy sauce for 15 minutes, then drain and pan-fry in peanut oil until browned on all sides, turning as needed. Set aside.
5. Sauté criminis in 1 Tbsp. butter for about 5 minutes, then, push mushrooms to the side of the pan and melt another Tbsp. butter in the pan, stir in the flour over very low heat, making a roux. When the flour is well mixed with the butter, slowly add the milk, and then stir in the criminis from the side of the pan. Remove the criminis & gravy and set aside.
6. Add olive oil to the pan and sauté the ramp greens (if using) for 3 minutes, then add steamed potatoes, mix well, add all the other ingredients and mix again. Season to taste with salt and pepper; serve hot.

[Editor's note: Joe & Kathy Brandt haven't set a publication date yet for their book. When it is available, I will let you know.]

***Squamosus* Soup**

1 “dinner-plate-sized” cap of *Polyporus squamosus* (This had to be hacked into thirds to make it fit into the pot.)
1 cup of finely sliced tender bits of *squamosus*
1 cup of chopped onions

1 cup of diced potatoes
1 can of “Chicken Noodle” soup
2 cups of commercial canned chicken broth

1. Put all of this into a gallon pot, bring to a boil, simmer half an hour, and serve hot. Or place it into a crock-pot and simmer it until the next mealtime. Ladle out the good stuff into soup bowls. Leave the tough old *Polyporus* “shoes” behind in the pot. They still have lots of flavor and will live to make a tasty broth or help another soup one day.
2. After the soup had been removed from the pot, I added enough water to cover the “old shoes” that remained behind. Those were simmered overnight, removed from the broth and relegated to the compost heap. They might also become suitable “chew toys” for your collie.
3. I stirred a chicken bouillon cube into the hot broth and presented it to my test taster, Dean Abel. He pronounced both the broth and the soup to be “Good, but a little salty.” You could reduce the salt content by making your own chicken broth without salt or replacing the can of commercial soup with two cups of your own soup made from scratch.

Finally, a vegan “meat” recipe from Mike’s friend and acclaimed wild food expert, “Wildman” Steve Brill.

Vegan Spare Ribs with Dryad’s Saddle Mushrooms

Fake meat provides the pork, dryad’s saddle mushrooms give the texture of the fat, and the sauce – well, it creates a perfect barbecue sauce topping.

1/2 cup olive oil
3 large red onions, chopped
2 cups dryad’s saddle mushrooms, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped

4 cloves of garlic, chopped
5 cups vegan ham, (available in Chinese fake meat stores and websites), cut into finger-sized pieces

Sauce Ingredients

1-1/2 cup fruit-sweetened ketchup
3/4 cup rice vinegar
6 tbs. tamari soy sauce
1 tbs. paprika
1/2 tbs. clear liquid stevia

3/4 tsp. chili paste or 1 tsp. hot sauce
3/4 tsp. cloves, ground
1/2 tsp. black pepper, ground
1/2 tsp. powdered mustard

1. Sauté the onions and green pepper in half the olive oil for 15 minutes or until lightly browned
2. Add the garlic, mushrooms, and vegan ham and sauté another 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, mix all the sauce ingredients together.
4. Transfer the onion and ham mixture to an oiled roasting pan, pour the sauce over it, and bake one hour in a preheated 350° F oven, or until the sauce is thickened.

Serves 6

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 60 minutes



Mike Krebill
V.P. & Newsletter Editor
Prairie States Mushroom Club
150 Oakcliff Lane
Keokuk, IA 52632-2538
MikeKrebill@aol.com

PSMC Web Site:
www.iowamushroom.org



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Follow-up to “Good Enough for Company”

by Dave Layton

[Editor’s Note: In “Good Enough for Company,” Dave sought experienced insight on whether a commonly found, much-maligned mushroom (*Polyporus squamosus*), could be turned into a dish worth sharing with company. He was able to collect young specimens before this newsletter was sent to our desktop publisher, and had a chance to try recommendations. Here’s his verdict.]

I have indeed been enjoying young tender dryads thin sliced, soaked in a marinade for a few minutes and cooked in olive oil and butter. My marinade has been makeshift –leftover juice from garlic beans with dry white wine added. I also added a couple of tablespoons of chopped garlic-

mustard root in with the mushrooms. I served with potatoes. My company (Sally) pronounced them quite tasty. We both had quite a bit and wished I’d prepared more. Next I’ll add some tamari sauce to the marinade

and I need to find some more garlic mustard root. It was tender, mild and not cloying. I’m thinking I should be able to find more garlic mustard somewhere. :) I’ll keep experimenting till my mushrooms are all gone. 

Two questions about the *Coprinus* species below:



1. What species is it?
2. If you have eaten it more than once, what is your favorite way of preparing it?

Please email your reply to
MikeKrebill@aol.com.

